

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4332

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SF

SUBJECT: POLITICAL PRISONERS AMONGTOPICS SCHEDULED FOR
PM/HOMELAND LEADERS MEETING

REF: DURBAN 0001

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: UPCOMING HOMELAND LEADERS' MEETING WITH
PRIME MINISTER VORSTER WILL FOCUS ON, INTER ALIA, RIGHTS OF
URBAN BLACKS, BLACK LABOR UNIONS, AND POLITICAL PRISONERS.
SOME SPECULATION EXISTS THAT VORSTER MAY MAKE SLIGHT
CONCESSIONS ON URBAN BLACKS. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTTEL REPORTED THAT KWAZULU CHIEF MINISTER GATSHA
BUTHELEZI WILL RAISE TOPIC OF AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS
IN HOMELAND LEADER CONVERSATIONS WITH PM VORSTER SCHEDULED
FOR CAPE TOWN JANUARY 22. BOPHUTHATSWANA CHIEF MINISTER
LUCAS MANGOPE RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFFS THAT OTHER CHIEF MINISTERS
WILL SUPPORT BUTHELEZI'S PRESENTATION. HOWEVER, IN ARTICLE
THAT APPEARED IN JANUARY 16 RAND DAILY MAIL, GAZANKULU
CHIEF MINISTER HUDSON NTSWANWISI IS QUOTED AS STATING THAT
"SOME DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AMONG HOMELAND LEADERS" STILL
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EXIST. NTSWANWISI SAID THERE IS "APPARENT CONSENSUS THAT

PEOPLE LIKE ROBERT SOBUKWE, WHO HAVE ALREADY SERVED SENTENCES IMPOSED ON THEM BY THE COURTS, SHOULD NOT BE RESTRICTED; THERE IS NOT (RPT NOT) THE SAME AGREEMENT ON MEN WHO ARE STILL SERVING SENTENCES."

3. IN APPARENT ATTEMPT TO FORESTALL USEFUL CONVERSATION ON ISSUE, GOVERNMENT HAS ISSUED GUIDELINES ON TOPIC. THOUGH NO SAG STATEMENT HAS BEEN PUBLICLY MADE, CHIEF MINISTER OF LEBOWA, DR. CEDRIC PHATUDI, HAS TOLD PRESS THAT SAG'S FORMULA ON RECEIVING REPRESENTATIONS FOR RELEASE OF PRISONERS FROM HOMELAND LEADERS DEMANDS THAT SUCH REQUESTS BE MADE ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUALS, AND NOT COLLECTIVELY FOR ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND THAT PETITIONS BE "ETHNICALLY CONSISTENT;" THAT IS, REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF A VENDA PRISONER SHOULD COME FROM VENDA HOMELAND, ETC.

4. CHIEF MANGOPE AND OTHERS INTEND TO RAISE ISSUE OF BLACK LABOR UNIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER. MANGOPE HAS RECEIVED BRIEF ON SUBJECT PREPARED BY BLACK TRADE UNION LEADER LUCY MVUBELO.

5. TOPIC RECEIVING MOST AIRING IN PRESS CONCERNS RIGHTS OF URBAN BLACKS. BOTH MANGOPE AND NEWSPAPERMEN IN PRETORIA TOLD EMBOFFS OF RUMORS THAT PM MAY MAKE SOME LIMITED CONCESSIONS CONCERNING BUSINESS AND/OR HOME OWNING RIGHTS FOR AFRICAN CITY DWELLERS. SUCH MOVES WOULD NOT BE CONSISTENT WITH SAG'S CONCEPTION OF BLACKS AS HAVING NO PERMANENT RIGHTS IN URBAN TOWNSHIPS. NEVERTHELESS SOME MOVEMENT MAY BE IN WIND, AS EVIDENCED BY RECENT EDITORIAL ENTITLED "HUMAN RIGHTS," IN WHICH PRO-GOVERNMENT DIE VADERLAND STATED: "THE SOWETOS, ATTERIDGEVILLES, AND LANGAS HAVE COME TO STAY AND THE INHABITANTS ARE ENTITLED TO ALL THE AMENITIES OF A NORMAL URBAN LIFE. FULLY EQUIPPED SHOPPING COMPLEXES, SUPERMARKETS, RESTAURANTS, THEATRES, FULL BUSINESS RIGHTS FOR THE BLACK MAN, THE RIGHT TO HAVE A PIECE OF GROUND OF HIS OWN--EVEN IF ONLY ON LEASE--A BIGGER SAY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HIS BLACK MUNICIPALITY... THESE ARE ALL HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH PEOPLE ARE ENTITLED TO HAVE IN THEIR OWN AREAS, IF THEY WANT THEM AND CAN AFFORD THEM."

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6. COMMENT: IT IS MOST UNLIKELY THAT SAG WILL ACQUIESCE IN DEMAND THAT POLITICAL PRISONERS BE RELEASED. HOWEVER, ISSUE NOT LIKELY TO DIE AS HOMELAND LEADERS ARE UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE TO PURSUE IT OR RISK BEING FURTHER DISCREDITED BY MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS IN BLACK COMMUNITY WHO ALREADY VIEW THEM AS WILLING ACCOMPLICES AND STOOGES OF GOVERNMENT'S APARTHEID POLICIES.

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